

Julie Masters, Mayor
Charles Suderman, Mayor Pro Tem
Sean Skipworth
Walter Wilson

MINUTES
City of Dickinson
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING

Wally Deats
Louis Decker
William H. King III
Chris Heard, City Administrator

August 17, 2020

The Dickinson City Council met in a duly called and announced **SPECIAL MEETING** on **Monday, August 17, 2020, at 6:30 p.m.** In accordance with order of the Office of the Governor issued March 16, 2020, the City Council of the City of Dickinson, Texas conducted the meeting by telephone and video conference in order to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings (also called “social distancing”) to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The meeting was held for the purpose of considering the following items:

ITEM 1.) CALL TO ORDER AND CERTIFICATION OF A QUORUM

Mayor Masters called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. City Secretary Alun Thomas called roll and certified a quorum. Council Members present were as follows: Mayor Julie Masters, Mayor Pro-Tem Charles Suderman, and Council Members Sean Skipworth, Wally Deats, Louis Decker, and William H. King, III. Council Member Walter Wilson was absent. Also present were City Administrator Chris Heard and Finance Director Penny Hunter.

ITEM 2.) PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION CONCERNING: Development of the 2020-2021 Budget for the City of Dickinson.

City Administrator Chris Heard introduced the item to Council and said that in this meeting, Council will focus on discussing Fund 8, the streets fund. Mr. Heard distributed several documents to Council, including a “Project 2020” document that proposes infrastructure projects including street reconstruction and approximately \$1,500,000 in street stabilization projects. Mr. Heard said that streets that have previously been identified as eligible for repairs through Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Hurricane Harvey rebuilding project will not be addressed as whole streets, although some work may be done on a limited number of segments of those streets.

Council discussed the widths of the City’s rights-of-way and whether streets could be built with wider pavement than that which they would replace. Mr. Heard informed Council that a very large number of accessory structures currently (and without authorization) encroach on the City’s rights-of-way, which would make it difficult to widen the streets.

Mr. Heard briefly discussed the progress made on existing projects. Task Work Authorization 5 he said, which was approved by Council through Resolution 1847-2020, was under construction, the forthcoming Task Work Authorization 6 would address Oak Park Street, Church Street, and Video Street. Mayor Masters has asked Dickinson Economic Development

Corporation for \$500,000 for these projects. A request for bids for Kansas Avenue and Pin Oak Drive should be issued by the end of this month, with the streets being completed about a year later. Mr. Heard confirmed that the proposed work (not including "dig out and replace" streets) would be for a full design, to include the street and drainage. In total, Mr. Heard proposes approximately \$13,000,000 to \$14,000,000 of street repairs or replacement for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, in part through emptying the City fund balance down to the legal minimum amount. That amount would improve 12.6 miles of City streets.

Council discussed the need for the City to better maintain its streets, with some members noting that very little of the budgeted funds for street patching and repair had actually been expended this year. Mr. Heard said that that was due to the department having so many vacant positions all year while he was focusing on the big picture instead. The department now has many more employees. Mr. Heard said that that increase in staff. Along with new street standard that he and Community Services Director Kola Olayiwola will soon bring to Council, will be of great benefit to the City. Additionally, Mr. Heard would like the City to purchase a "Gradall" machine, which is specifically designed to facilitate more accurate ditch-digging. Council Member Deats said that there is a noticeable difference in the work produced by contractors and that of City staff; the esprit de corps of our City staff shows in their work.

Next, Council briefly discussed several other budget issues, including a letter that the City had received from the City of League City expressing its concern that the City of Dickinson utilizes its ambulances far more often than it should need to, the proposed ad valorem tax rate for next fiscal year, and whether the City Council should be presented with budget amendments with greater frequency.

Council concluded the meeting by discussing the City's animal control budget. In response to a question about potential overspending on the animal shelter construction project, Mr. Heard confirmed that the project was overbudget by approximately \$600,000 for a total project expenditure of approximately \$1,900,000. The additional funds, he said, were necessary because Council approved a construction project (through Resolution 1674-2018) that failed to include necessary items such as internet connectivity and a fire suppression system. Mr. Heard said that for smoother operation, Bayou Animal Services should not exist as a separate entity and that it should be made a department of the City. Council Member Suderman remarked that the reason that it was a separate entity was because the services were shared by the Cities of Clear Lake Shores, Dickinson, and Santa Fe. This arrangement was specifically chosen because the centralization of authority with Galveston County under the previous agreement for animal control services left the member cities relatively powerless to set service levels and to control costs.

ITEM 3.) ADJOURN

Council Member King made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:34 p.m., and Council Member Suderman seconded the motion. There being no discussion, Mayor Masters called for the vote.

VOTE:

5 AYES (Suderman, Skipworth, Deats, Decker, King)

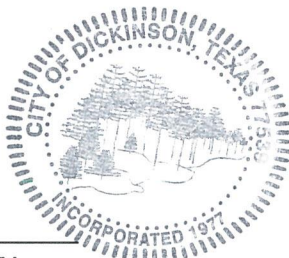
0 NAYS

MOTION PASSED

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this the 25th day of August, 2020.

ATTEST:


Alun W. Thomas, City Secretary




Julie Masters, Mayor